

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 DHA-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
/020 W

-----110326Z 108444 /22

R 101342Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5165

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 0643

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, ZA
SUBJ: STUDENTS CONTINUE OBJECTIONS TO REDUCTION IN MONTHLY
ALLOWANCE

SUMMARY: SINCE MID-FEBRUARY HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS
IN ZAMBIA, OTHER THAN AT THE UNIVERSITY, HAVE CONTINUED
A SERIES OF LOW LEVEL, SPORADIC AND APPARENTLY
UNCOORDINATED DEMONSTRATIONS OBJECTING TO THE REDUCTION
IN THEIR MONTHLY ALLOWANCE FROM K10 TO K5. POLICE ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS HAVE BEEN CALLED IN, THE LATEST WAS MARCH
7 AND 8 WHEN POLICE USED TEAR GAS TO DISPERSE STUDENTS.
THEIR COMPLAINTS HAVE ANNOYED THE GRZ ENOUGH TO STIMULATE
A SHARP REBUKE FROM PRES KAUNDA WHO WARNED THE STUDENTS
THAT HE WOULD NOT HESITATE TO USE APPROPRIATE MEANS TO
ENFORCE THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION, INCLUDING, IF NECESSARY,
CLOSING VOCATIONAL AND TRADE SCHOOL CAMPUSES. GRZ CLEARLY
INTENDS TO DEAL FIRMLY WITH THE STUDENTS AND WE BELIEVE
THEY WILL BE KEPT IN HAND. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY, MARCH 7 AND 8, THE STUDENTS
AT EVELYN HONE COLLEGE IN LUSAKA STAGED A RELAXED SIT-IN
AROUND THE CAMPUS WHILE COURSES APPARENTLY CONTINUED.
POLICE WATCHED FROM A DISTANCE WITHOUT INCIDENT. HOWEVER
WHEN SOME BACK ALLOWANCES WERE PAID THE STUDENTS, THEIR
CELEBRATION TURNED INTO A CONFRONTATION WITH THE POLICE.
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STUDENTS WERE FORCED BACK INTO CAMPUS BUILDINGS AND ALONG
WITH SOME FACULTY EMPLOYEES CAME UNDER A TEAR GAS ATTACK. A
FEW STUDENTS WERE INJURED, OTHERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AND
APPARENTLY TREATED WITHOUT GREAT SYMPATHY BY THE POLICE.
THIS WAS THE LATEST AND MOST SERIOUS STUDENT/POLICE CON-
FRONTATION SINCE STUDENTS BEGAN PROTESTING THE REDUCTION
OF THEIR MONTHLY ALLOWANCE FROM K10 TO K5 PER MONTH. THE LAST

FAIRLY SERIOUS STUDENT/POLICE CLASH CAME AT NDOLA IN MID-FEBRUARY. THE REDUCTION OF ALLOWANCES WAS ANNOUNCED JANUARY 28 BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE IN PRESENTING GRZ BUDGET FOR 1977.

2. STUDENTS HAVE RECEIVED ORAL SUPPORT OF THE ZAMBIAN CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS (ZCTU) IN THEIR REQUEST FOR REINSTATEMENT OF FULL OR INCREASED ALLOWANCE. MANY FACULTY MEMBERS ARE SYMPATHETIC TO STUDENT DEMAND AS ALLOWANCES ARE USED BY STUDENTS WHO ARE IN MANY CASES CHILDREN OF SUBSISTENCE LEVEL INCOME FAMILIES. ALLOWANCES ARE USED TO PURCHASE SUPPLIES, I.E. PAPER, PENS, AND BOOKS SUPPLIED IN THE PAST BY THE COLLEGES. STUDENTS ARE NOT LIKELY TO GIVE IN EASILY SINCE AT THE SAME TIME THEIR ALLOWANCES WERE CUT, HIGHER LEVEL GRZ OFFICIALS RECEIVED INCREASES IN ALLOWANCES. THE CUT DOES NOT AFFECT TUITION, LODGING OR FOOD, AND DOES NOT APPLY TO UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA STUDENTS.

COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT HAS HANDLED THIS MATTER WITH RESTRAINT TO THIS POINT, PERMITTING THE STUDENTS TO LET OFF STEAM IN VARIOUS WAYS. WE BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT WILL HANDLE THE STUDENTS WITH INCREASING FIRMNESS AND WILL BE ABLE TO KEEP THEM IN HAND. LOW

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 10-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LUSAKA00643
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770083-0862
Format: TEL
From: LUSAKA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770374/aaaacmvd.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 0aadd1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3151803
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STUDENTS CONTINUE OBJECTIONS TO REDUCTION IN MONTHLY ALLOWANCE SUMMARY: SINCE MID-FEBRUARY HIGHER EDUCATION STUDE
TAGS: PINS, SEDU, ZA
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/0aadd1ba-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009